

d.) Remarks

Reconsideration of this application in view of the amendments made to the claims is respectfully requested.

The 112 Rejections

In the outstanding Office Action, (paper No. 5), claim 12 was rejected under 35 USC 112 because the specification did not recite "pressure vacuum vessel." Claim 12 has been amended to replace this phraseology with "pump." Support for this amendment may be found a numerous places within the specification. See, for example, the specification at page 12, lines 1 and 19; at page 23, line 10 and at page 24, line 26.

Claims 1-5 and 12-13 were rejected under 35 USC 112 because no structure was recited to define "mix volume." Claim 6 has been cancelled and a "mix vessel" has been added to claim 1 to provide a structure that contains the recited "mix volume." Claim 4 has also been amended to change "volume" to "vessel."

Claims 10 and 11 were rejected as being dependent on a non-existent claim. Claim 10 has been amended to depend from claim 2.

For the respective reasons stated above, each of the 35 USC 112 rejections has been overcome, and each of the rejections should be withdrawn.

The 102 and 103 Rejections

Claims 1-3 and 12-13 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Lascombes 5,318,750.

Claims 1-2, and 12 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Chan 5,647,391.

Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Chan.

Claims 3-6, 8 and 13 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Chan in view of Lascombes.

Claims 7 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Chan in view of Lascombes as applied to claim 6 above and further in view of Leverenz 3,710,811.

Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that aspect of applicant's invention having at least one control valve that is operative to vary the rate of addition of the at least one chemical component in response to the measured conductivity value of the slurry. None of the references alone or in combination teach or suggest this aspect of varying the rate of addition of a chemical component in response to measured conductivity. Accordingly, amended claim 1, and all claims depending from claim 1 are allowable.

New claims to the method of the present invention are also presented with this response. New independent method claim 14 includes steps that provide for the rate of addition of the concentrated slurry to be varied in response to the monitored conductivity and thus claim 14, and all related dependent claims, are allowable for the same reason stated with respect to claim 1. Support for new claims 14-21 is found in Figures 7A and 7B and in the specification beginning at page 19 in the specification.

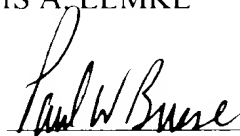
Conclusion

All of the rejections of the claims have been overcome and a notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

TRAVIS A. LEMKE

By:



Paul W. Busse, #32,403
FAEGRE & BENSON LLP
2200 Wells Fargo Center
90 South Seventh Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402-3901
612/766-7046

Dated: February 6, 2003
M2 21521084-1